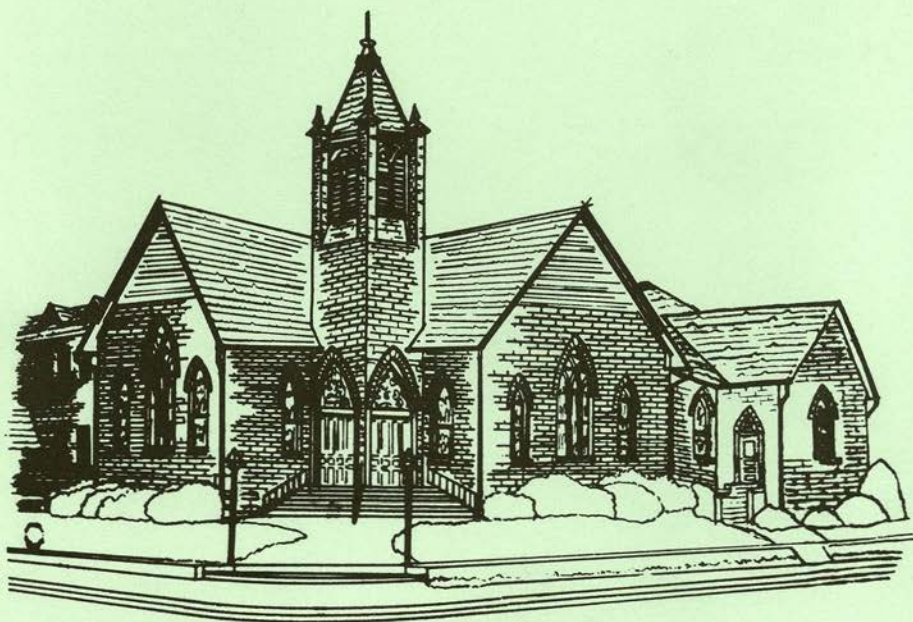


CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

1877 - 1977



First United Methodist Church Hamlet, N.C.

ROBERT M. BLACKBURN
BISHOP RALEIGH AREA

CLYDE G. MCCARVER
SUPERINTENDENT

T. M. FAGGART
MINISTER

MISS GAIL WALKER
DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

MR. AND MRS. RICHARD RADFORD
MISSIONARIES TO ZAIRE

MRS. DURHAM WILLIAMS
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

MRS. MICHAEL NEWTON
SECRETARY

ALLEN MARTIN
CUSTODIAN

"A Historic Church With a Contemporary Commitment"

CENTENNIAL NIGHT

March 12, 1977

Invocation

Evening Meal

Introduction of Guests: Reverend T. M. Faggart

Greetings: Mayor Thomas E. Smart
City of Hamlet

Introduction of Former Pastors

Reverend J. A. Russell

Reverend A. C. Lee

Reverend Russell Harrison

Reverend Kirk McNeil

Miss Carolyn Gabriel

Reverend Kenneth Sexton

Reverend Howard McLamb

Reverend David McLean

The Presentation of our Church History: Mrs. Allan Powers

The Benedictory Prayer: Reverend T. M. Faggart

DIVINE WORSHIP
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

March 13, 1977

Prelude: "Sanctus" Gounod

*Call to Worship

*Hymn of Praise: "A Mighty Fortress is our God" No. 20

Prayer of Confession: Unison

Lord, we have failed as instruments of your peace.

We have sown:

HATRED instead of LOVE

INJURY instead of PARDON

DOUBT instead of FAITH

DESPAIR instead of HOPE

DARKNESS instead of LIGHT

and SADNESS instead of JOY.

O Divine Master, forgive us our sins, and grant us the power to overcome our weaknesses. Amen.

Silent Prayer and Individual Meditation

The Lord's Prayer

*The Psalter: "Thy Law is My Delight" No. 594

*Gloria Patri

The Scripture Lesson

The Anthem: "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" Ehret

Centennial Litany

Beloved in the Lord, we rejoice that God put it into the hearts of his people to establish His church at this place in 1877. His Spirit has enlightened our forefathers with wisdom and given a great measure of success in ministering to the town of Hamlet. Let us therefore, solemnly express our gratitude to Almighty God.

We meet on this centennial Sunday

To Glorify God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit;

To Remember our humble beginnings;

To seek courage to minister to the Future; and

**WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND
THANKSGIVING**

For the Shortridges, Goodwins, Cowans, Pegrams,
Thompsons, Bridgers, Paces, Whitings, Loves, Gibbons,
Lands, and Boyettes; Forefathers who sought this place on a
busy thoroughfare to show forth a Christian light to the
surrounding community:

**WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND
THANKSGIVING**

For strong and enlightened pastoral leadership;
For laypersons not ashamed of the gospel,
For a spirit which built this congregation into one of the great
churches of Eastern North Carolina;

**WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND
THANKSGIVING**

For the awareness that Christ's church ministers today;
For blessing our missionaries in foreign countries;
For allowing us to make secure the needs of needy children
and distressed persons in the golden age of life;

**WE OFFER OUR PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND
THANKSGIVING**

Because we must minister to generations yet unborn;
Because the spirit calls us to prepare the way even today;
Because we earnestly seek to follow in the tradition of those we
honor today;

WE SEEK SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE.

WE NOW, THE PEOPLE OF THIS CHURCH AND CONGREGATION, COMPASSED ABOUT WITH A GREAT CLOUD OF WITNESSES, GRATEFUL FOR OUR HERITAGE, SENSIBLE OF THE SACRIFICE BY OUR FATHERS IN THE FAITH, CONFESSING THAT APART FROM US THEIR WORK CANNOT BE MADE PERFECT, DO DEDICATE OURSELVES ANEW TO THE WORSHIP AND SERVICE OF ALMIGHTY GOD: THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

Worship with Tithes and Offerings: "Share His Love" Reynolds

*Offertory Prayer

*Doxology

Moments of Fellowship

*Hymn of Preparation: No. 92
"Amazing Grace! How Sweet the Sound"

Sermon: The Reverend Clyde G. McCarver

*Hymn of Dedication: No. 470
"God of Grace and God of Glory"

*Benediction

*Response

*Postlude: "Allegro Pomposo" Galbraith

A HISTORY OF FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, HAMLET

By — Catherine Monk

First Methodist Church of Hamlet, 1877 - 1977, one hundred years of history in the making. We have a heritage of which we all can be proud. Our roots grow deep and are closely entwined with the roots of the town and its people.

For the history of our church is more than just dull dates and unfamiliar names on a printed page. It is real, live people and events, pulsating with excitement, that have brought us where we are today.

We have shared tears of joy and tears of sadness. We have mourned and we have rejoiced. We have had our good times and, regretfully, our bad.

But, through it all we have remained united, one church under God.

Now we have reached another plateau. One hundred years have passed. It is time to pause and to celebrate this, our centennial.

Let us reflect on the past and, in so doing, give thought to our future.

The year is 1877. The sweet sounds of a melodeon fill the air and then die away. Rev. Baxter Phillips steps forward, calls his small congregation to order. Worship services begin.

And so, too, begins the First Methodist Church of Hamlet.

Inside the small frame building are a handfull of stern-looking early Hamlet settlers. Among them is John Shortridge, a founder of the town and of this first Union Sunday School. He has organized the religious service for all who want to attend and it is he who pays the preacher \$5 for his monthly visits. Rev. Phillips is not here often. He is also pastor of the Laurinburg Methodist Church and is forced to divide his time between congregations.

Our little church, hardly more than a shelter from the cold, sits on a hillside near the railroad tracks on what is now Hamlet Avenue. Hamlet is only three years old, just beginning to grow.

And, like the town, we, to, grow and move forward.

The Methodist congregation expands, a new sanctuary is needed. We join the Manly Mission Charge and the Rev. Phillip Greening is appointed the first pastor.

The year is 1887. A second church is built farther up on Hamlet Avenue on the lot where Pee Dee Bottling Company now stands. This land is made available by a deed of trust from the Shortridge estate.

John Shortridge died in 1922, but his son, Frank, still attends services. Others in the congregation include Mr. and Mrs. T. B. Pace, Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Bridgers, Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Cowan, Mrs. B. Whiting and Mrs. Mary Love.

The membership is less than 30, but every Sunday you can see the faithful few coming to church dressed in the styles of the day. Prim and proper, they wear the solemn black.

Gentlemen are attired in vested suits topped by a frock coat which reaches to the knees. The ladies wear a high neck dress with long sleeves and a full skirt that touches the floor. She tops this off with a little black bonnet and ribbons that tie under the chin.

1902. Fifteen years go by, Mrs. A. S. Cowan moves to town and joins the Methodist congregation, helping with the music. **The Rev. C. O. Durant is the preacher in charge and conducts services once a month.**

Mrs. Cowan vividly describes this period in our church's life:

"It was verily a little church in the woods surrounded by scrubby oak trees. Inside are two rows of seats that extend to each side of the building and a very wide aisle in the center. The pulpit is high with steps leading up to it.

"There was a small reed organ and the 'Amen Corner' was given over to the choir. Mrs. O. T. Goodwin was organist and the choir was composed of, among others, Mrs. Ruth Pegram, Ben Goodwin and J. E. Thompson."

"As a family would enter the church, they would separate. The men and boys going into the pews on one side, and the women and girls together with all small children, into the pews on the other side."

Members of this early church still living today are Murphy McDonald, Mrs. Ada Polk and Mrs. J. J. Boyette. Strong supporters of the church through the years were the Pegrams, the Lands, and the Gibbons.

It is now 1904. The Rev. Durant is still pastor. The congregations petitions the Conference for a full time minister. A young man, the Rev. E. T. Ussery, is sent, and the Hamlet Church becomes a station.

Church membership again expands. A larger sactuary is once more needed.

J. B. Goodwin, Frank Shortridge, O. T. Goodwin, H. E. Gibbons and A. S. Cowan get together and sign a deed to purchase property on the corner of what is now High and Charlotte Streets. The land is sold by the Seaboard Air Line Railway for the sum total of \$450.

Charlotte Street was chosen as the site for this was the town's main throughfare and only named street. Even so it was little more than wagon and buggy tracks with shifting sand which made walking difficult for pedestrians.

April 19, 1906, the cornerstone of the present church is laid by Hamlet Masonic Lodge 532. We are almost home

W. J. Galloway donates the cornerstone. The Rev. T. A. Sykes leads the building committee and the church is completed. A parsonage is raised on the lot next door.

The church continues to grow and in 1914 is enlarged. The old reed organ is moved out and a pipe organ is installed with Jules Huguelet as organist. W. H. Powers follows Huguelet as organist and serves the church until his death in 1951. The sanctuary takes on a majestic look with its stained glass windows and the golden pipes of the organ reaching almost to the ceiling. A part of this original reed organ remains with us today for the wood was used to make an altar pulpit in the Wesley Bible Classroom.

Then comes the war.

World War I leaves its mark and man of our young men are called into another kind of service. The Rev. J. H. Buffaloe and the Rev. M. H. Tuttle remain behind to minister to our needs during this time of trouble.

1921, certainly an important date. A move is underway to build a modern church Education Building. Melissa Dennis contributes the first dollar, the fund drive snowballs, and the building becomes a reality.

By Easter Sunday of 1932 the entire debt is paid. The Rev. J. A. Russell is pastor and makes the announcement: the church is free of debt for the first time.

"My Church" is the theme the following summer when Bishop Clara Purcell comes to Hamlet to officially dedicate the church to the glory of God on Sunday, June 26, 1938. W. R. Land makes the formal presentation of the church and Mrs. A. G. Powers relates its history. The sanctuary is decorated with flowers furnished by Miss Effie Reade Westcott.

According to newspaper account of the event: "Very impressive dedicatory services were held in the Methodist Church of Hamlet Sunday morning when Bishop Clare Percell formally dedicated the church to the Lord amid an overflowing of members and many visitors. . . .

"Amplifiers were installed to accommodate the large attendance, many of which were unable to obtain admittance to hear the ceremony."

"Thus was the Hamlet Methodist Church formally dedicated to and by its members who feel they now have a real sanctuary for the soul and a help in guiding their earthly actions to meet the test of the great beyond."

It is a happy occasion, but sadness is not far away.

World War II and 50 of our own boys are called to fight for our country. Rev. J. H. Lanning and Dr. S. A. Maxwell led the church through this period of trouble. We at home are able to help by opening our Education Building to soldiers stationed at Camp MacKall. We offer them sanctuary, entertainment, a reading room, a place where they can forget about war for a while.

Then this, too, passes and we move on to brighter days.

1949 and the Rev. J. J. Boone is in the pulpit. It is time for a new parsonage. The former Austin home on the corner of Entwistle and Hylan is purchased and the ladies of the Woman's Society of Christian Service see that it is properly furnished.

The old parsonage becomes a Youth Center and the scene of many MYF activities. The new parsonage, not so new any more, continues to serve our present pastor.

Thanks to the women, however, the parsonage has recently had a facelifting with paper, paint and new furnishings. Perhaps we should pause here to explain the important role these church women have always played.

The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society was organized in 1903 and through their efforts \$200 was secured from the Mission Board to help build our present church building. They are also responsible for redecorating the sanctuary in 1954 and installing the red carpeting.

Through the years the Women of the Church have given financial aid and carried out a great missionary program to the Foreign and Home Fields. Mrs. Euline Smith Weems, one of our own daughters, served on the Mission Field in Korea for many years until her retirement.

And the men, too, serve. They are not to be slighted for they have traditionally been our leaders.

The Methodist Men's Service Club was organized May 8, 1951, and through their efforts many new people joined the church. Later, in 1954, a Methodist Men's Club was formed and a charter received. This club continues to offer fellowship and inspiration for all men of the church and their fund-raising projects have helped us in numerous ways.

It is the combined support of these two groups, however, that furnishes our underlying strength.

This brings us to 1953. The golden pipes of the church organ come down, the sanctuary is remodeled, and a new electronic organ is installed.

The Rev. H. M. McLamb is pastor. Under his leadership, the official board votes to sponsor another Methodist Church in Hamlet.

"When Howard McLamb makes up his mind about something," remembers one member of his congregation, "it is as good as done." And so it was. Property was purchased on McDonald Avenue Extension and a new congregation formed.

Fellowship Methodist Church comes into being. First Methodist, the mother church, continues on her own, a bit saddened by the loss of some of her faithful members.

April 24, 1955, and the church celebrates 75 years of service. The Rev. A. C. Lee leads the anniversary program with Bishop W. W. Peele bringing the Sunday morning message on, "Our Heritage and Our Responsibility". Dinner on the grounds follows and a big crowd attends.

1960 and another dream is realized. The Rev. J. C. A. Autry appoints a committee to begin plans for an additional Education Building. Serving on this committee are H. W. Gulledege, Hal Ingram, T. C. Whitlock, Mrs. H. K. Covington and Mrs. Nathan Gibson.

The Youth Center is torn down to make room for expansion and the adjoining property is purchased from Mrs. Elizabeth Sasser through the efforts of J. P. Gibbons Sr. In a spirit of love and sacrifice, the building debt is paid by members and friends of the church.

September 10, 1961, and the congregation gathers as ground is broken for the new Education Building. A lovely chapel is included and dedicated to the memory of Fred M. Avett.

Three months later to the day, December 10, 1961, and the church is hit by tragedy. The annual program of Christmas is presented with Rev. Autry presiding. All is well and then a few hours later, the beloved pastor dies.

"Rev. Autry had served his church with a special grace and distinction and was one of the most highly respected men in this section of the Carolinas." This was part of the Eulogy given on the day of his funeral, December 12, 1961.

As a token of respect, the Official Board later voted (March, 1962) to have the new Education Building known as the Autry Building. Bishop Robert M. Blackburn officially dedicated the Autry Building on November 10, 1974, during the pastorate of the Rev. Kenneth Sexton. Presentation of the building was made by the trustees of the church. Rev. Sexton led the church in paving the parking lot and purchasing cushions for the Sanctuary pews.

There are two other important dates we have not yet mentioned. Both took place under the leadership of the Rev. Dewey Tyson. On May 7, 1967, the hymnals in the church were dedicated in memory and in honor of loved ones. And on November 24, 1968, the memorial chimes that add so much to our worship services today, were dedicated.

Thus we come to 1977 with the Rev. Tom Faggart as pastor. We bring this centennial history to a close with the certain knowledge that other important names and dates have been left out. For each member of this congregation of 1,020 is important and each day, a new opportunity.

It is only through the faithful service of Susie Powers that these events have been recorded with any degree of accuracy. It is she who is the true church historian.

"During the course of its history, a church passes through many rich experiences. Though they may vary a great deal in nature, they all contribute to the total welfare of the church." --- Dewey Tyson, September 22, 1965.

This message still holds true today. What will be written about our church tomorrow, depends entirely on us, its members.

PASTORS

Reverend Baxter Phillips

Reverend Phillip Greening

Reverend M. A. Smith

Reverend H. M. Jackson

Reverend T. M. Chaffin

Reverend J. M. Crowson

Reverend J. H. Page

Reverend J. E. Thompson

Reverend C. O. Durant

Reverend E. T. Ussery

Reverend T. A. Sykes

Reverend H. A. Humble

Reverend S. T. Moyle

Reverend J. A. Dailey

Reverend M. H. Tuttle

Reverend J. H. Buffaloe

Reverend E. C. Few

Rev. O. W. Dowd

Reverend C. D. Barcliff

Reverend L. B. Jones

Reverend B. P. Robinson

Reverend J. H. Shore

Reverend W. V. McRae

Reverend J. A. Russell

Reverend J. H. Lanning

Reverend S. A. Maxwell

Reverend J. J. Boone

Reverend H. M. McLamb

Reverend A. C. Lee

Reverend J. D. A. Autry

Reverend A. L. Thompson

Reverend Russell H. Harrison

Reverend Dewey M. Tyson

Reverend Kenneth B. Sexton

Rev. T. M. Faggart

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEES

KITCHEN COMMITTEE

Mrs. R. J. Howie, chairperson
Mrs. W. C. Carnes, chairperson
Mrs. E. H. Ramsey
Mrs. W. F. Davis
Mrs. D. H. Carnes
Mrs. D. S. Craddock
Mrs. R. D. Blakely
Mrs. J. B. Muse
Mrs. Don Perry
Mrs. W. G. Roseborough
Mrs. A. C. Gardner
Mrs. Ray McDuffie

WELCOMING COMMITTEE

M/M Nathan Gibson
M/M Clarence Reid
M/M Ralph Winchester
M/M C. J. Fetner
M/M C. L. Thomas, Sr.
M/M Earl Covington
M/M Lawrence Pegram
M/M Dewey Crenshaw
M/M Tom Whitlock
M/M H. W. Hendley

CENTENNIAL COMMITTEES

DECORATING COMMITTEE FOR SATURDAY NIGHT

Margaret Gullledge, chairperson
Mrs. Catherine Dillehay
Iris Holland
Josie Maurice

SANCTUARY DECORATING

Nora Hatcher, chairperson
Frances Winchester
Frances Gibson

COMMITTEE TO INVITE MINISTERS

Mrs. Susie Powers, chairperson
Mrs. Verdie O'Brien
Mrs. Marie Palmer
Mrs. Helen Gibbons
Mrs. Gladys Whitlock

PUBLICITY

Mr. A. D. Way

TRANSPORTATION

Mr. Fred Jenks
Mr. Jack Bankhead

HISTORY

Miss Catherine Monk